

may report that there seems to be more interest in debating this issue in a number of different guises than there is of any other part of the Interior appropriations bill. I, obviously, will be here for the day. I hope I am accompanied by the great majority of those who wish to speak on the issue.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, what is the business before the Senate?

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under a previous order, there will be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for 10 minutes each.

OPPOSITION TO THE GORTON AMENDMENT

Mr. BINGAMAN. Madam President, I wanted to speak first today about this Gorton amendment that we adopted yesterday as part of the Labor and Human Services appropriation measure.

The Senate approved that amendment by a narrow vote of 51 to 49. And the effect of the amendment is to convert billions of dollars in Federal education funds into unrestricted block grants that go to school districts, and with very few restrictions or accountability for how the funding is spent. I think the amendment is extremely far-reaching, and it was a mistake by the Senate to go along with this amendment. I hope very much that, in the final analysis in the conference, we can drop the amendment and send to the President a bill that keeps intact the various programs that many of us have worked for on both the Democratic and Republican side of the aisle for many years.

Let me just say, putting it in its baldest terms, that this amendment would eliminate much of the U.S. Department of Education. That is a radical and a misguided effort, which does not have strong public support. This is an issue that was discussed in the last Presidential campaign. It became clear, I believe, during the course of that campaign and in the polling that was done throughout the campaign and since, that the American public does not favor elimination of the Department of Education, either in a formal way or by the gutting of the Department through an amendment such as this.

I have fundamental problems with the notion that there is no national interest in helping parents and schools and students to compete in the world

economy. What we are saying is that the local schools in every part of this country can figure out how to prepare their students to compete in the international marketplace if they have no help from outside. I disagree with that. It is not realistic to expect a local school board to have at its disposal the resources and expertise that we can develop at the national level and provide as assistance in the educational process.

So there is an honest disagreement here about whether we as a nation can step up to this responsibility and assist States and local school districts, or whether we need to stay completely out of it. I feel very much that we need to provide assistance and expertise where we can.

The Secretary of Education, in a quotation in the morning paper, says very clearly—this is Secretary Riley in the Washington Post:

Secretary Riley warned that the Senate's action, which he called a "back-door attempt to kill the Department of Education" would abolish many vital programs for students, including Clinton's Goals 2000 grants for school reform.

Madam President, when you look at the roughly \$12.5 billion in annual funding for Federal education programs that would go into block grants under this amendment, you see how broad-based this amendment is. Let me just go through the list so the people know what we are talking about here.

First of all, there is the Goals 2000 program that, of course, has been somewhat controversial, but has been a great benefit to many school districts in my State. I go to school district after school district as I travel around New Mexico and talk to those school district administrators and teachers and students about the Goals 2000 program. I find good support for it. I think they appreciate the funding they have received and the assistance that the Federal Government provides. So it would be eliminated.

The School-to-Work Program. The education funds involved in the School-to-Work Program—not the Department of Labor funds, but the Education Department funds—would be eliminated.

Education technology. This has been a concern of mine and of many Senators for many years now as to how do we get additional resources to our schools and to our school districts so that they can put in place the various purchasing of hardware and software and training of teachers that is necessary for them to turn out a technologically literate group of graduates at the end of the high school experience.

Star Schools Program, the regional technology education consortia, the telecommunications demonstration programs that are in place around the country, the challenge grants for technology innovation, technology literacy challenge fund—all of these are specific initiatives that have benefited my State significantly.

I think it would be a major error for us to eliminate the Federal funds.

Some will say we are not eliminating Federal funds, we are giving a block grant to the school districts and if they want to spend them on this, they can. The unfortunate reality is that a local school district is under tremendous pressure. The school board members in my State are elected, as they are throughout most of the country. They are under tremendous pressure at the local level to raise salaries, raise salaries for school administrators, to build additional facilities, and to do a whole range of things. If we want funds to go to improve technological literacy and provide educational technology for our schools, we have to specify that is what the money goes for. Otherwise, the reality is that it will be spent for other purposes.

So this Gorton amendment eliminates any requirement that any funds be spent for this purpose. I think that would be a major mistake. In my own State, we have received, this year, about \$1.7 million in Federal funds for educational technology. We are expected, this next year, to receive \$3.5 million in funds. The total, nationwide, is \$425 million. I think this is money well spent. It is cost-effective. It is a cost-effective way for the taxpayers to try to assist in improving education at the local level.

Let me go through some of the others that are covered here. The Eisenhower professional development State grants. These are funds that go to assist teachers in getting additional training so that they can better teach and remain in the profession of teaching. The innovative education program strategies under title 6. The safe and drug-free schools program. Again, in my State, I have gone to many schools and they have been extremely appreciative that the safe and drug-free schools program has allowed them to hire counselors to work at the middle school level, so that when students are beginning to get into difficulties with drugs or beginning to lose interest in school and become truant, they can have counselors there to be an early prevention device to keep those students involved. That safe and drug-free schools money would be eliminated under this amendment.

The magnet schools assistance. That, again, has been very helpful in many school districts around the country. Education for homeless children and youth. Women's educational equity funding. Education for native Hawaiians. Alaska Native education equity funding. Charter schools funding. Funding for Indian education. All of these are specific programs that will not be funded if this amendment prevails. So, clearly, I think we have a major problem. Bilingual and immigration education programs are another example.

The key part of this amendment that I think is most objectionable is that it creates an unmonitored windfall to local school districts that would be used for any of a wide range of purposes. There would be no oversight, no

accountability as to how any of the funds are spent. The various purposes that we have meticulously specified over the years as priorities for the Nation, those priorities will be put aside.

Let me mention one other program, Madam President, that I think is of particular concern as to how it would fare under this amendment, and that is title I. When I talk to elementary schoolteachers and administrators in my State, the one Federal program that they consistently point to and say "thank you" for sending the funds to the State and to local districts, it is in this title I area. That is funding for disadvantaged students. It makes a tremendous difference in many of our schools. I think for us to—in an amendment here on the floor, without hearings, without any comprehension of what we are doing—just say we are going to eliminate title I, I think that is highly irresponsible. I believe very strongly that we made a serious mistake when we went that way.

So there is no accountability if this amendment prevails. There is no oversight by the Federal Government as to how these funds are spent if this amendment prevails. We would cut State support networks out of the picture, also, if this amendment prevails. The Gorton amendment fully bypasses State educational agencies. In my State, our State educational agencies help to coordinate and monitor programs. Those are all bypassed under the amendment. Some people think that block granting education funds might give local school districts more control or more funding. The reality is that if we block grant these programs and bypass the entire State education network, we put a huge administrative burden on school districts, which very few of them are equipped to handle at this point. About 6 percent of Federal funds is taken off the top by States for administrative and technical expenses. I wish they didn't have to take any expenses off. But I fear that we will see a duplication at the local district level that will soak up substantially more than 6 percent of the total Federal funds if we bypass the networks that the States have set up.

In my own State, there is really no way to anticipate the total effect of this amendment. It is untried. Funding levels would basically be determined by having each individual district conduct a self-reported census on its own of all school-age children in the district, weigh the district's funding according to each State's average per capita income level. It is not difficult to guess that we won't do nearly as well in my State as some might think. Current formulas already awarding money directly to the school district based on individual community need would be scrapped and many communities would be left to fend for themselves.

Madam President, in summary, let me just say that this amendment should not become law. I am persuaded

that if it remains in this bill, the President will veto the bill, as he should.

I think this is the kind of irrational, unwise, misguided action which we sometimes get involved in here in the Senate when we don't have active debate. There was not adequate debate on the Gorton amendment. We have not had hearings in the Education Subcommittee of the Labor and Human Resources Committee on the Gorton amendment. If Senator GORTON and other sponsors of this bill want to pursue this course of action, I believe it should be put out as a piece of legislation that we can have hearings on in the authorizing committee. I am fortunate to be a member of the Labor, Health and Human Resources Committee which has worked long and hard over the years to authorize the various Federal programs being eliminated with this amendment. I think the proper course would be to have a full set of hearings on all of these programs, and determine which of them should be eliminated. If the will of the Senate and the will of the Congress and the will of President is to eliminate some of them, then fine. But coming along with this kind of an amendment absent hearings and absent adequate debate I think is not the responsible way to proceed.

So I would join others here in objecting strenuously to the provision. As Senator DODD suggested yesterday on the floor, if the bill comes back from the appropriations conference with this provision in it, he would commit to filibuster against the 1998 appropriations bill. I hope very much that course is not required. But, obviously, I and many others would have to join him in that course of action, if that amendment remains in the legislation.

Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). The Senator's time just expired.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 10 additional minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I wanted to speak for a few minutes here on the subject of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. My distinguished colleague from Delaware, Senator BIDEN, spoke about it this week. He, of course, is the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee which is one of the key committees with responsibility over this subject matter.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, as I understand it, is intended to be sent by the administration to the Senate in the very near future. And I want to just reemphasize some of the points that Senator BIDEN made, and highlight the importance of the treaty to

our national security and international peace.

In the wake of the cold war, our world remains a very dangerous place in which to live. When the United States and the Soviet Union were still aiming thousands of nuclear warheads at each other during the cold war, all of us understood the danger that existed—perhaps only a half an hour away. But with the fall of international communism, the world breathed a huge sigh of relief, and hoped that we could move into a postnuclear age. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a major part of the hope and a major part of what needs to be done in order to move into that postnuclear age.

No greater threat to our national security or international peace exists than the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The potential damage that such weapons could do remains no less a threat than the one that we feared during the cold war. Think for a moment about the possibility of terrorists armed with nuclear weapons having been in the Tokyo subway instead of terrorists there with nerve gas. Think of the possibility of terrorists having been in Oklahoma City with a small nuclear weapon instead of with the weapon that was there. Perhaps my colleagues have read recent reports about the suitcase-sized nuclear weapons being unaccounted for in Russia. Whether these reports are true or not I recently had the chance to visit Russia and observe a model of the nuclear weapons that existed there; the size of artillery shells. And I am told that is also a weapon that we have had in our own inventory at various times. Such miniature nuclear weapons are indeed, feasible. They pose a realistic threat to the post-cold war world in which we live.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a critical element in the spectrum of policies and actions that we need to take to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons of whatever size—prevent the spread of them to rogue nations, to terrorist organizations, to individuals bent on some type of irrational destructive behavior. For countries that have no nuclear weapons, it is impossible for them to develop nuclear weapons and be confident that they will work without being able to test them.

Senator BIDEN recently stated that the proof of this belief is manifested by the current reluctance of Pakistan and India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. These nations currently prefer to be able to test their weapons in order to ensure that they work—thereby demonstrating their nuclear capability and supporting their foreign policy goals. The danger of a nuclear conflict between these two nations and the potential impact such a war could have on the entire planet should be very clear to everyone who serves here in the Senate.

But India and Pakistan, and other potential nuclear powers, will not step